

COLCATE & COMPANY JERSEY CITY PLANT: B-1
(Colgate-Palmolive Company Jersey City Plant: B-1)
57 York Street
Jersey City
Hudson County
New Jersey

HAER No. NJ-71-D

HAER
NJ
9-JERC1,
18D-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

Northeast Area Office
National Park Service
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

COLGATE & COMPANY JERSEY CITY PLANT: B-1*
(Colgate-Palmolive Company Jersey City Plant: B-1)

HAER No. NJ-71-D

- Location: 57 York Street, Jersey City, Hudson County, New Jersey
- Significance: Probably the oldest Colgate factory building surviving in 1988, B-1 visually anchored the corner of Greene and York streets with its brick facades and inset limestone street name block. Although not individually significant by virtue of severe alterations, B-1 was significant as a component of the Colgate plant, particularly as part of the oldest plant block.
- Description: B-1 was a three-story-plus-basement structure with Creek Revival influences, occupying a 25-by-50-foot lot, with four bays on Green Street and seven bays on York Street. The brick bearing building had wood columns, floors, and framing, a flat bituminous roof, steel and aluminum jalousie replacement windows and no exterior entrance. Ornamental details visible in 1988 were limited to a parged brownstone water table, lintels and sills; an inset limestone street name block at the northwest corner; a simple wooden entablature and cast iron star-shaped washers at the second and third floor levels. The structure originally extended about forty feet further south, but most of it was removed for the construction of B-15 (HAER No. NJ-71-0). Access to the structure in 1988 was through the interior of B Block only; the original entrance, located in the easternmost bay of the York Street facade, was replaced by a window and the stairs were removed (NORTH ELEVATION; FIRST FLOOR OFFICE TO NORTH-WEST).
- Other alterations included pressed-tin ceilings, poorly re-pointed brickwork, cement- parged brownstone details, and interior finishes obscured by modern materials, such as linoleum tile floors, acoustical ceilings and paneled walls. Remnants of an original chimney and fireplace were visible in the south wall of the basement locker room and from the roof (BASEMENT LOCKER ROOM TO WEST; FIRST FLOOR OFFICE TO NORTHWEST).
- History: Jewelry manufacturer Brenton B. Grinnell probably built B-1 c1850, as a structure of about 50 by 65 feet. Colgate & Company occupied part of the structure by 1866 and purchased it in 1869, as it expanded its original Jersey City facilities. Grinnell's firm, or another jewelry manufacturer, continued to use part of the structure into the 1870s under an arrangement

* Capitalized references are photographs included with this documentation, or with other documentation packages for HAER No. NJ-71 and associated structures.

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not yet documented. The continued presence of this other firm may explain why Colgate chose to demolish much of B-1 and build a different, connecting structure to the south c1870 (HAER No. NJ-71-0; see HAER No. NJ-71, B-1 (LEFT) AND NORTH HALF OF B-15, WEST ELEVATIONS). Parts of B-1 were used for soap manufacture in the 1870s and perhaps later, but at some undocumented point the structure was converted to a locker room and offices. B-1 was demolished in 1989.

Sources:

Colgate-Palmolive Company has no pertinent historic plans or drawings of B-1. Documents listed below allow for inferences about early structure history.

Culver, I.B.

1866 Map of Jersey City. On file, New York Public Library.

Dripps, M.

1850 Map of Jersey City and Van Vorst Township, New Jersey. New York.

Hudson County Deed Books

1853 Vol. 32, p. 33

1869 Vol. 194, p. 251

Jersey City directories, 1849-1869 (authors and publishers vary), on file, Jersey City Public Library

Washington Fire Insurance Company of New York

1872 Policy of Insurance No. 2288, May 15, 1872. Original in possession of Carter Litchfield, Kemblesville, PA.

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Figure 1. LOCATION OF B-1 AT COLGATE JERSEY CITY PLANT

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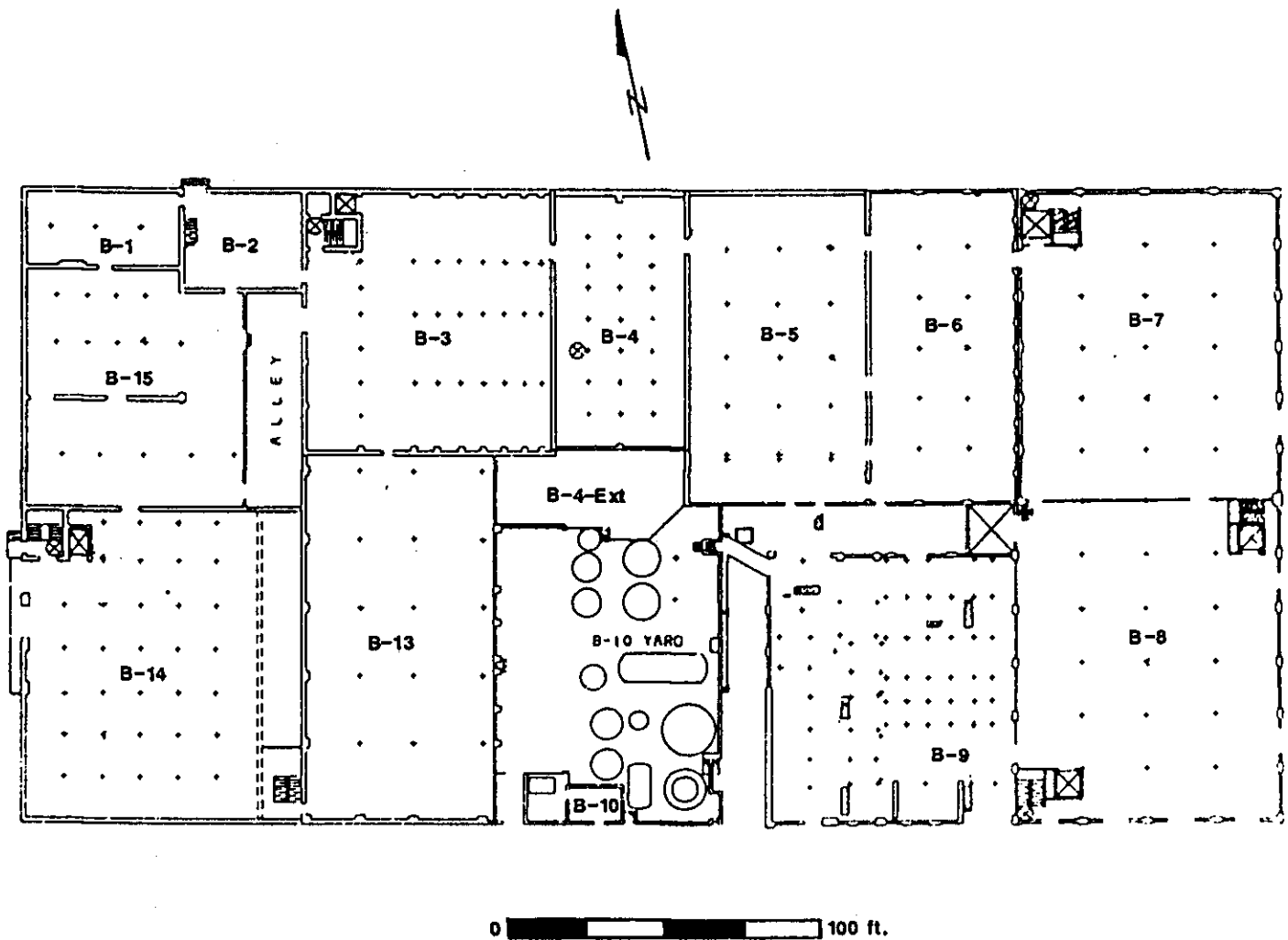


Figure 2. TYPICAL B BLOCK FLOORPLANS